



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

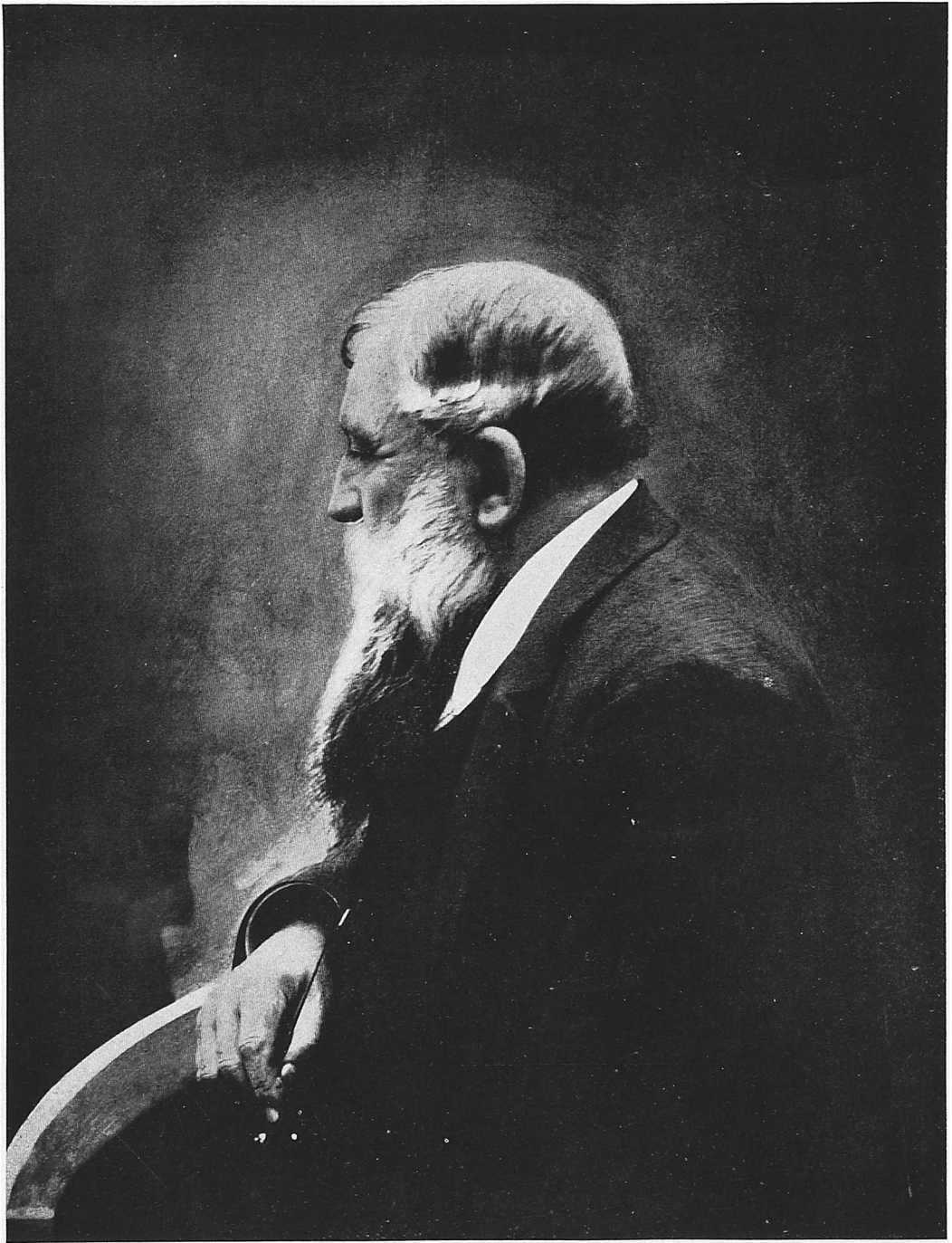
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

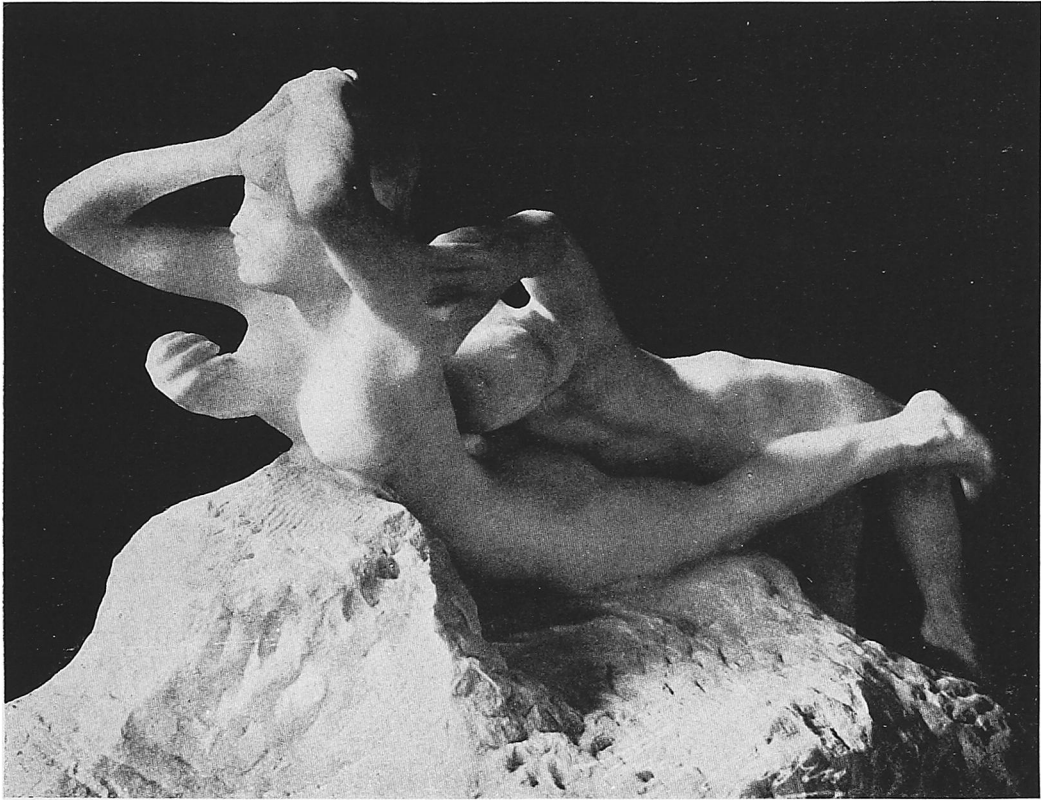
We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



AUGUSTE RODIN—SCULPTOR



LA SPHYNGE
By AUGUSTE RODIN

Among Sculptures—Auguste Rodin

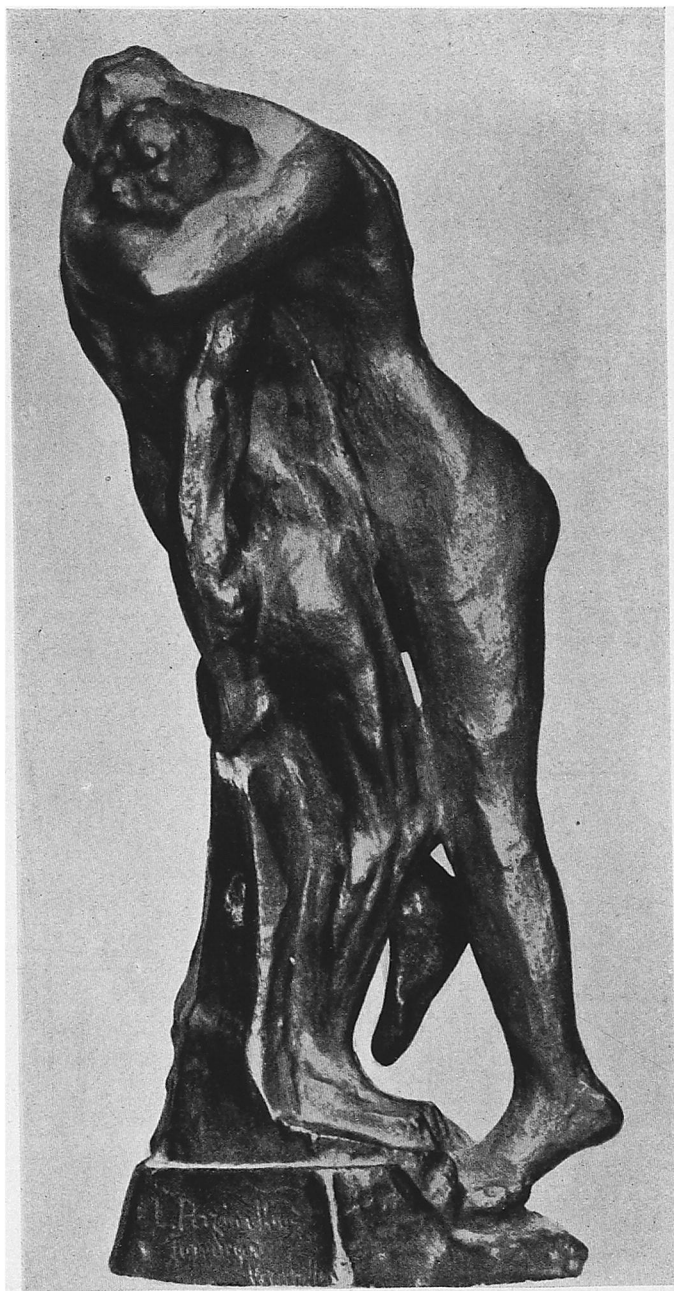
By CHARLES LOUIS BORGMAYER

(Chapter V)

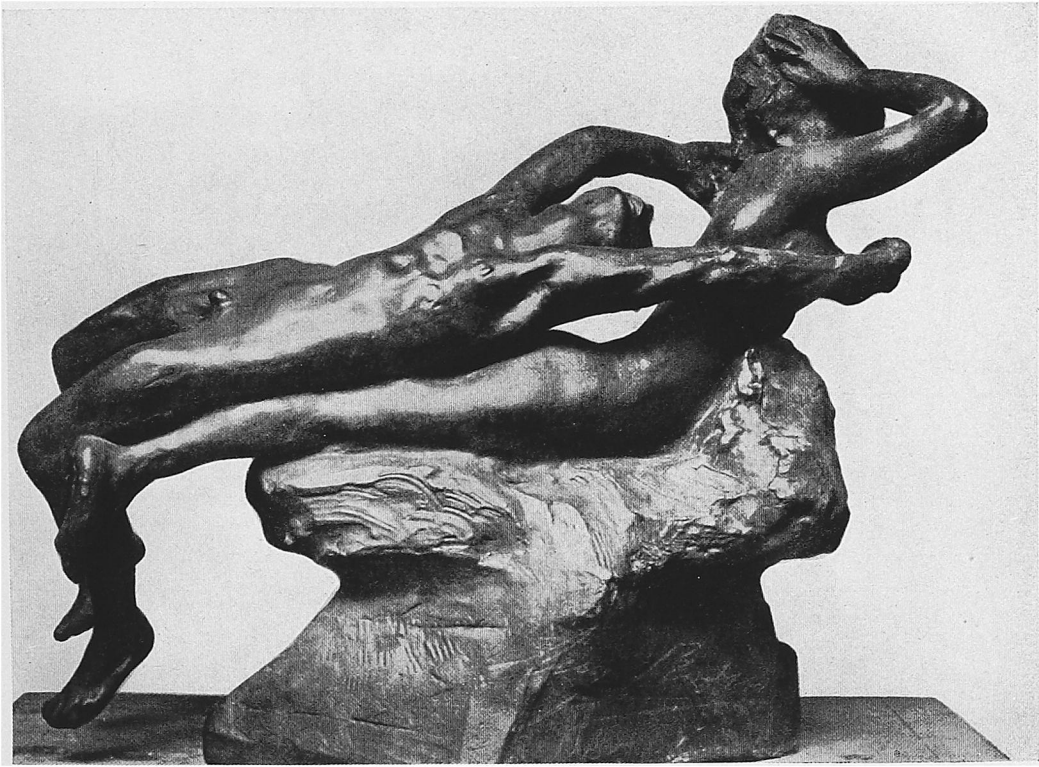
IN speaking of modern sculptors one easily falls into the habit of tracing their ancestors. The sculptors joined in kinship by a common revolt against the ideal of the Greek sculptors and by the love for vigorous movement, form a very large family. Not to go very far back we see Houdon as one shining member of this family; from him descended Rude, from Rude came Carpeaux, and from Carpeaux came Rodin. This brings us to a point in the consideration of modern sculpture where it may be of interest to speak at length of certain sculptors whose works form a distinct line

of demarcation between the work done thirty years previous to theirs and work which is being done today. Among these men, Auguste Rodin stands pre-eminent.

Rodin's work, Rodin's thoughts, Rodin's city and country homes, and Rodin himself have been so discussed, so written about, that it would seem superfluous to attempt to add anything to the reams already read and forgotten. The attempt, however, must be made for no talk about sculpture of to-day could ignore Auguste Rodin. A sketchy account of his early life taken from Camille Mauclair's book, "Auguste Rodin," will



"THE EMBRACE"
By AUGUSTE RODIN



LA SPHYNGE
By AUGUSTE RODIN

suffice to remind us of what most of us have read many times:

"Auguste Rodin was born in Paris in 1840, of a family of humble workmen. The child at first attended day school, then went to a boarding school at Beauvais, kept by his uncle. At fourteen he returned to Paris and entered a school of art in the rue de la Médecine. In this little school he learned the elements of drawing and of modeling. He attended Barye's classes twice a week in the Jardin des Plantes. His life from fourteen to seventeen was a strenuous one. At 6 a. m. he was drawing the animals, then copying anatomical studies in the Museum. After his classes he lunched on a bit of bread and chocolate and hastened to the Louvre, and in the evening he went to draw and study at the Gobelins. During this time he supported himself by working in the studio of a decorative sculptor where he

now says he came to understand the science of modeling. It was one of his companions, Constant, who revealed it to him. He tells the story himself: "One day watching me model a capital ornamented with foliage, 'Rodin,' he said to me, 'you are going about that in the wrong way. All your leaves are seen flat. That is why they do not seem real. Make some with the tips pointed at you, so that in seeing them, one has the sensation of death.' I followed his advice, and I was astounded at the result that I obtained. 'Always remember what I am about to tell you,' went on Constant. "Henceforth, when you carve, never see the form in length, but always in thickness. Never consider a surface except as the extremity of a volume, as the point, more or less large, which it directs toward you. In that way, you will acquire the science of modeling."



FAUNNESS
By AUGUSTE RODIN

"This principle was astonishingly fruitful to me. I applied it to the execution of figures. Instead of imagining the different parts of the body as surfaces more or less flat, I represented them as projectures of interior volumes. I forced myself to express in each swelling of the torso or of the limbs the efflorescence of a muscle or of a bone which lay deep beneath the skin. And so the truth of my figures, instead of being merely superficial, seems to blossom from within to the outside, like life itself."

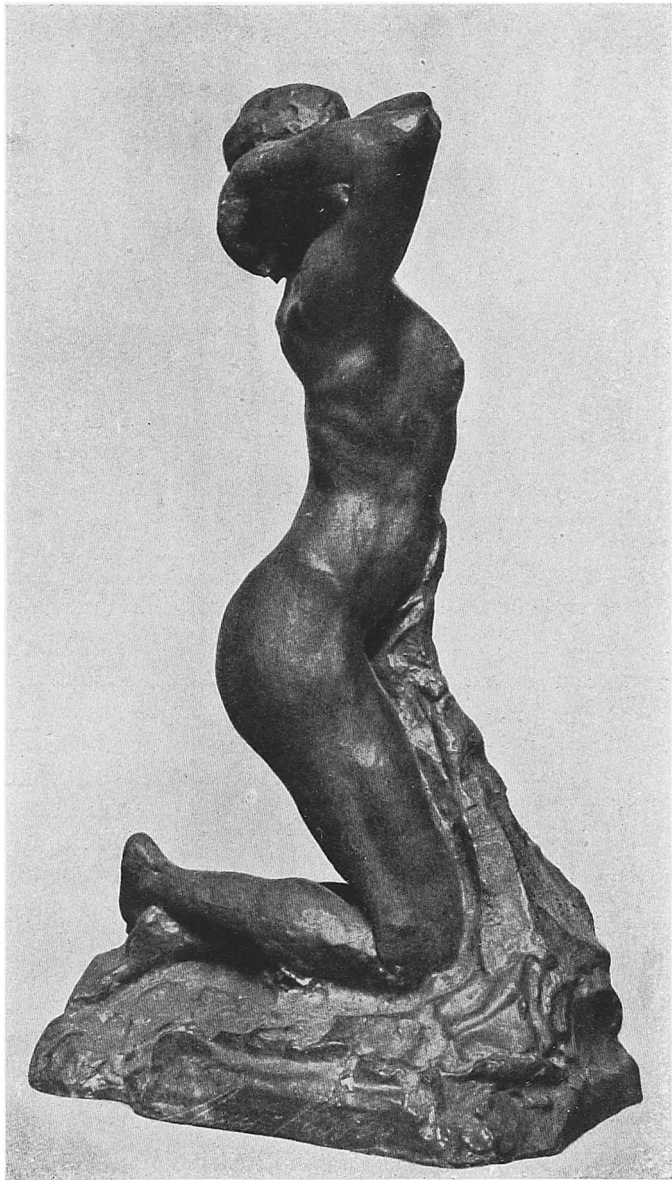
It was about this same time that he had his first studio. "My first studio. Never will I forget it! It was near the Gobelins,

and I paid twenty-four dollars a year for it. It leaked everywhere. It was very cold. It was there I worked at my *Man with a Broken Nose*." (Rodin still thinks that he has never surpassed this piece in its sincerity of modeling.) "The studio was filled with works that I had started, and having no money to have them cast, I was forced each day to spend precious time in covering them with wet cloths and even then accidents occurred constantly caused by the cold or the heat. Big pieces would fall to the floor. Sometimes I was able to recover them, but you have no idea how much was lost."

When Rodin was about twenty-four, he entered the studio of Carrier-Belleuse, where he remained for six years, more as a workman, however, than as a pupil. Then the Franco-German war in 1870 sent him to Brussels, where he worked on the Bourse and other commissions. It was during his stay in Belgium that he created his *Age of Brass*. He often refers to the influence this time spent in Belgium had upon him. "It was there I first learned to work in earnest. On week days I worked for a living; on Sundays I worked for the sake of working and learning. I could not afford to hire models and therefore my former wife sat for me. It was tiresome business for both of us. In this way, however, I learned to understand the human body. In the past I had only seen models, now I was beginning to see life."

His first real master, he says, was Lecoq de Boisbaudran, a man whose teaching consisted in allowing his pupils to develop themselves according to their own capabilities. De Boisbaudran was one of those rare teachers who penetrate the souls of their pupils, analyzing their natural inclinations in art and propagating them as a gardener does his plants. This Boisbaudran school graduated some of the great realists in contemporary art; Rodin, Legros, Gabriel Ferrier, L'hermitte, Fantin La Tour, and many others.

FAUNNESS
By AUGUSTE RODIN

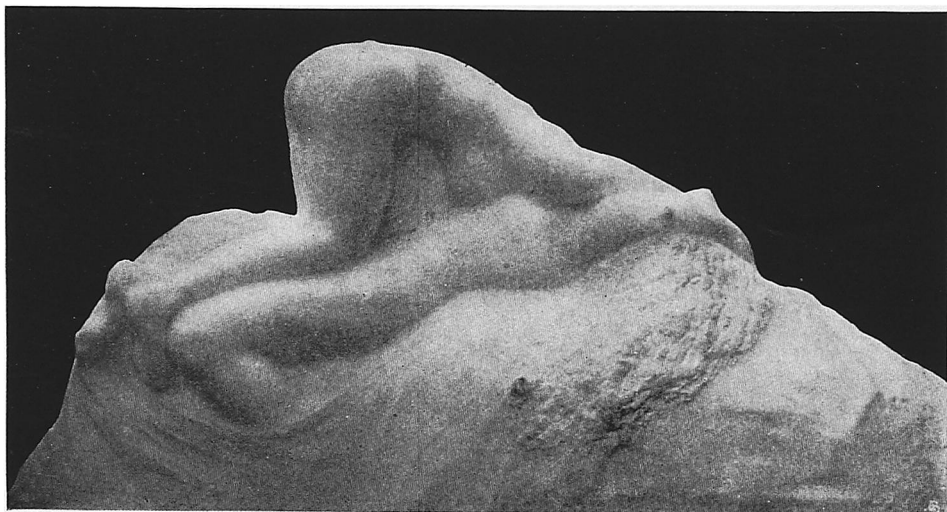


This is Rodin's personal history up to about 1876, when he had his first work accepted by the Salon. Each one of his important works since then carries a bit of his personal history, as each one has been subjected to adulation or criticism, always extreme, one way or the other. One likes strongly, or dislikes strongly, the works of Auguste Rodin.

To give his works in correct chronolog-

ical order would interfere with a later chapter I hope to write on the statuary in The Luxembourg. I have separated the works of Rodin, now in The Luxembourg, from the others, thinking that a visit to this gallery, where we can make comparisons with the near-by works of his contemporaries, might be interesting.

I spent several most interesting afternoons with Rodin. One of them was in



"THE EMBRACE"
By AUGUSTE RODIN

the company of J. Gedney Bunce and Alexander Harrison. We taxied out to Val-Fleury from Paris on one of those marvelous days that Paris sometimes gives us in early summer. Naturally on our way we talked of the great man we were about to visit. Personal anecdotes mingled with serious talk made the ride seem all too short. Just at this time the papers were filled with talk of the Rodin Scandal, as it was called. Forain, the clever caricaturist, had shown Rodin in the chapel at the side of the Hotel Biron, his Paris home, surrounded by nudities, in the form of models, drawings, etc. Rodin has had his full share of newspaper notoriety, both pleasant and otherwise, but up to this time, he told us, the attacks had always been against his works, not against him personally. He denied *in toto* all that Forain suggested. He said in speaking of Forain: "The excellent caricature rests on an absolute error, very well done, but outrageously false. I have never entered the chapel of the hotel. I have never drawn there. I have never received models there. It is pure calumny. Today some people reproach me for the license of my thoughts. I have never ex-

posed certain of my drawings, studies that I have done for my own personal use. Those who have wished to see them I have willingly allowed to do so but they have come to my house to see them. Those who do not wish to see the instruments of the surgeon, or the nudities of the professor of anatomy, do not go to the house of the surgeon, or to the house of the professor. The truth is, if these same sketches were exposed in the *kiosques* of the Boulevards I doubt if anyone would pay a sou for them because of their licentiousness. When they say I dishonor an old cloister, it is all imagination. The Hotel Biron was not originally a convent. It was built for a seignior of the eighteenth century and any amusements we of this century might have would be innocent indeed as compared with the *fêtes galantes* of those times. It was not until early in the nineteenth century that the Hotel Biron passed into the hands of the church and then it was used as a school until the sequestration of Roman Catholic property took place."

In truth it can be said that Rodin saved this exquisitely harmonious building from destruction by living in it and paying a very

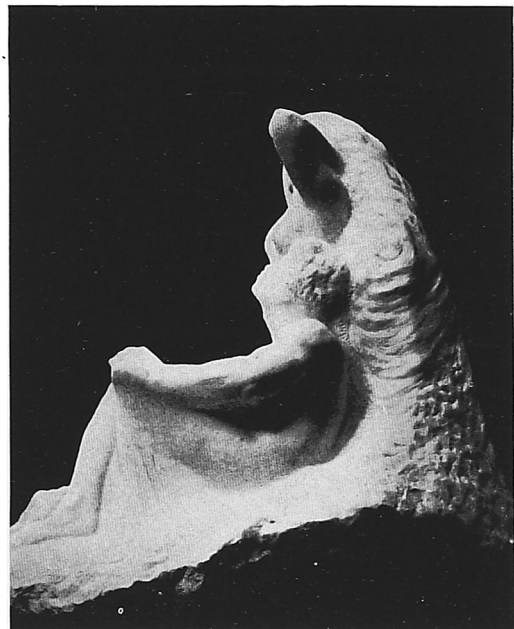


PYGMALION
By AUGUSTE RODIN

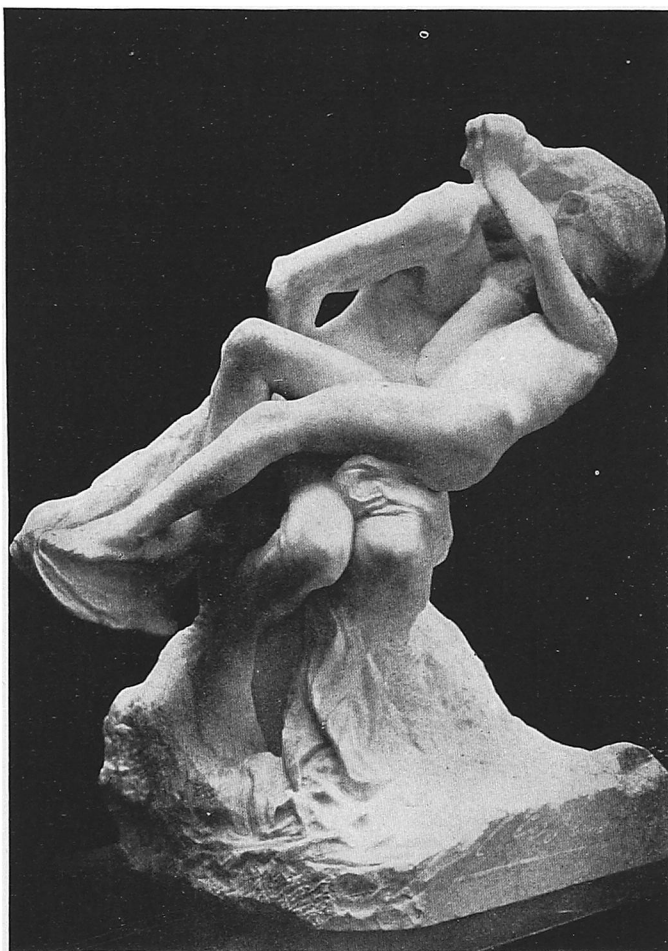
fair rental. The scandal died a natural death and it is now about decided that the Hotel Biron will become the Rodin Museum. In 1908 Rodin made his first proposition to the French people, which was in a word that he be allowed to live there free of rent provided that upon his death his sculpture and sketches, as well as his magnificent collection of works of art, should become the property of the Government and the Hotel Biron be known henceforth as the Rodin Museum. The idea that a French artist, no matter how famous, should dictate such terms of everlasting fame to the Government did not please the French public. The proposal aroused strong opposition in almost every quarter. Rodin threatened several times to move bag and baggage to Italy unless he was given an affirmative answer to his proposition. After six years it looks as if Rodin had won his fight.

This is getting a little ahead of our story.

We are still in the taxi on our way to make our visit, still discussing Rodin. The "Scandal" started it; from that we passed to the sensuality in his work. I must confess to me there seems an undue amount of sex feeling in his works. He pays too much attention to the emotions of a sexual kind for my taste. But my companions told me vehemently that his works are of the nineteenth century, representing what the French give so much space to in literature and art. I was reminded by them that I came from a town where the monuments decorating the squares and parks were open to even stronger criticism than mine on Rodin's sensuality. I was told that the desire to write history in every work was the leading motive of our official sculptors and that this desire has led to a profusion of poor statues set up to the memory of politicians, statues that merely served to inspire in our breasts a few philosophic reflections on the danger of mediocrity. "What we really need are sculptors to place great deeds before the public mind as an inspira-



"REVERIE"
By AUGUSTE RODIN



GODDESS OF FATE WITH
YOUNG GIRL

By AUGUSTE RODIN

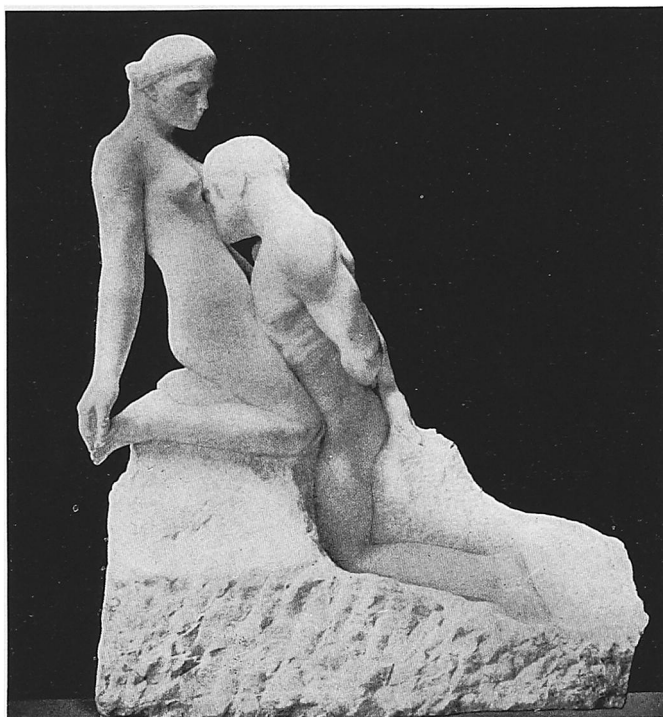
tion from which other great deeds might arise." Thinking of some of the atrocities perpetuated in the name of art, in my home town, I subsided and let myself be lectured on the sin that a sculptor commits in forcing his poor work on the attention of a passer-by. They were quite right when they said that one can avoid a mediocre sermon, a poor concert, a tiresome book, but one cannot avoid the sight of a statue or the mural decoration of a building for they slap one in the face daily.

They argued so strongly against "my silly prudery" that were I not such a stubborn creature I would probably write of Rodin's things as spiritual. No, never! He may

be, and undoubtedly is, a "sculptor of souls," but naked souls are rank things at times. I reminded them that the Metropolitan Museum evidently had some of my feeling, as it has shown considerable reserve in its choice of subjects, although I understand it was given *carte blanche*. To which they replied: "It is for that very reason that, great as their collection is, it does not represent all of Rodin's many sides." While we are on this subject we may as well talk it over and check it off.

Gustave Kahn says: "During one whole period Rodin devoted himself to expressing different aspects of love—its joy, its grief, its madness—nay, more, he gave us its very

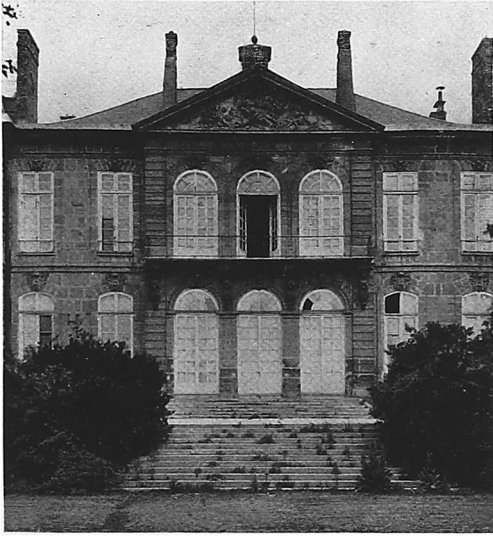
THE ETERNAL IDOL
By AUGUSTE RODIN



soul and type and quintessence. And it is not love alone, not a mere sexual instinct that he translates, but a vital one. One of Rodin's embracing couples makes us think not only of the moment of passion, but also of the joy of all created flesh, of the sensual joy that stirs in the heart of all things. In many of his hand-high groups and statuettes one gets a strong reminder of Baudelaire, who was the great poet of his early days. Among such groups we have the *Rape* (*L'Enlèvement*) in which a man is catching up in his arms a woman who, by a marvelous piece of fore-shortening, seems to be actually shrinking into herself; *Possession* (*L'Emprise*) in which the man is violently flinging himself on the woman; clusters of *Bacchantes* who by the fury of their contortions recall the *Femmes Damnées* of Baudelaire. In another work we have represented the heavy sleep of a woman exhausted by the caresses of a satyr; then we have a satyr rushing on a woman; and the calm and bewitching joy

of womanhood when the vanquisher humbles himself at her feet; a gentle *Eve* confronting a violent *Fauness*, both the innocent and the evil one depicted with equal mastery. And again, in another work, the impetuosity of Rodin's power shows us a woman of prey bearing off in a triumph of joy—like a hunter of game—the youth of her desire flung across her shoulder. Rodin's satyrs and fauns, unlike the dainty and gallant monsters of the eighteenth century, are inspired with a breath of fury which seems to urge them forward in mad pursuit of the coveted moment." It is about this period of Rodin's art that Roger Marx writes, "Fatality seems to dog his couples: they pursue and attract and embrace each other, but even after their embraces they still keep the bitterness of unsatisfied desire."

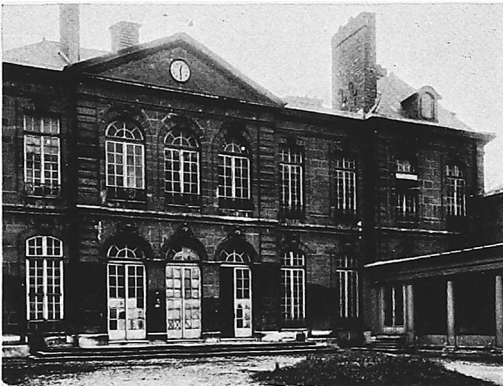
Bunce and Harrison having downed me, for the moment, peace was restored between us and we began to take notice of our surroundings. The noble lines of the



HOTEL BIRON BUILT IN 1728—RODIN'S HOME IN PARIS

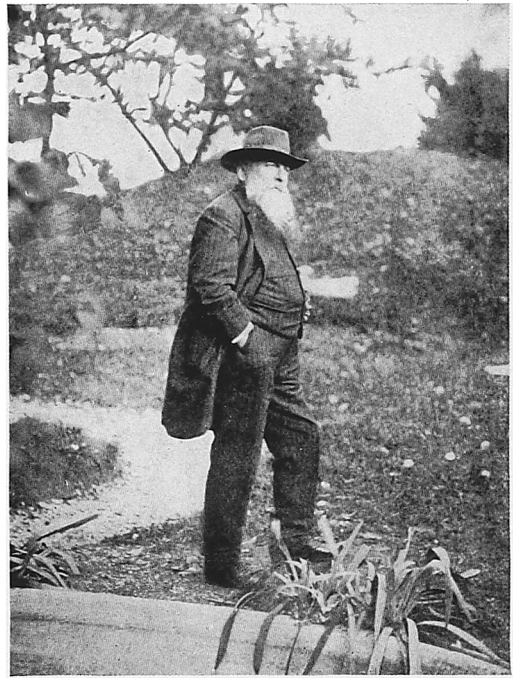
Sculpture Gallery came into view. Later on, I found that this pavilion is Rodin's most important building, the others being only ordinary affairs; a house of no special distinction and one or two old cottages, that he has turned into studios, make up the whole, so far as I could judge.

Rodin, it is said, is not particularly fond of Americans, but we three were received most graciously at the garden gate. He led us slowly along a shaded path from where we caught the white gleam of a half-hidden torso, of a vase or of a statue. Soon we reached the portico of the Gallery, where a wonderful view unrolled itself.



SIDE VIEW OF HOTEL BIRON—RODIN'S HOME IN PARIS

There below us was the Seine as it passes between the hills of Meudon and Issy. In the far distance the captive balloon tugs at its rope. An infrequent train passes over the high railway viaduct that runs along the valley, its noise interrupting the quiet of the stillest spot near Paris. All this time we were talking, Rodin in a low voice pointing out some special treasure with a most captivating simplicity of manner. I, meantime, gathered an impression of a man, a little below medium height with broad shoulders and a large face; a massive feeling in both head and body, a feeling of



AUGUSTE RODIN IN HIS GARDEN AT VAL-FLEURY, MEUDON

strength and passion. A long flowing beard, grayish short hair and healthy complexion were a few of the details. He often half-closed his smiling light blue eyes, to suddenly open them wide. He moved slowly, gravely gesticulating with his large, short-fingered hands.

The porch of the Pavilion is filled with fragments of antique statues. At the threshold are his own *Eve* and *Age of Brass*. As



RODIN IN HIS GARDEN AT VAL-FLEURY, MEUDON

we passed among the treasures Rodin lifted a cloth that covered a piece still wrapped in its wet cloths, looked at it earnestly and then with a rapid stroke of his pencil made a few marks to remind him of the idea that had just come to him. It is said that he is forever retouching and recommencing. I remember seeing at least ten busts in clay of Clemenceau and then, he said, neither he nor Clemenceau was satisfied. Clemenceau was so dissatisfied that he would not allow the bust to be exhibited at the Salon of 1914 even after it had been entered and catalogued. However, the empty space, where it should have been, was as exciting to the French public as the bust itself would have been.

Soon Rodin excuses himself and we wander around by ourselves. Bunce wonders where the transformed laundry is that contains the drawings not usually shown stray

guests. Harrison has often seen them, and while he explains at great length that Bunce is too young to roam alone among the sketches, I wander from one treasure to another. They ranged from the antique to the most modern, acute studies of humans from beast to angel. Replicas of many Luxembourg pieces were there, others I had never seen before. Among them were busts in marble, plaster or bronze. None showed the smirk of self-satisfaction; rather was there the feeling of torment, of not having yet arrived at the idea each was seeking to reach. He seldom represents complete repose in his busts. There is usually some gesture, some inclination that adds to the signification of the physiognomy.

Rodin's great busts of contemporary French artists are among the most wonderful productions of modern times. They

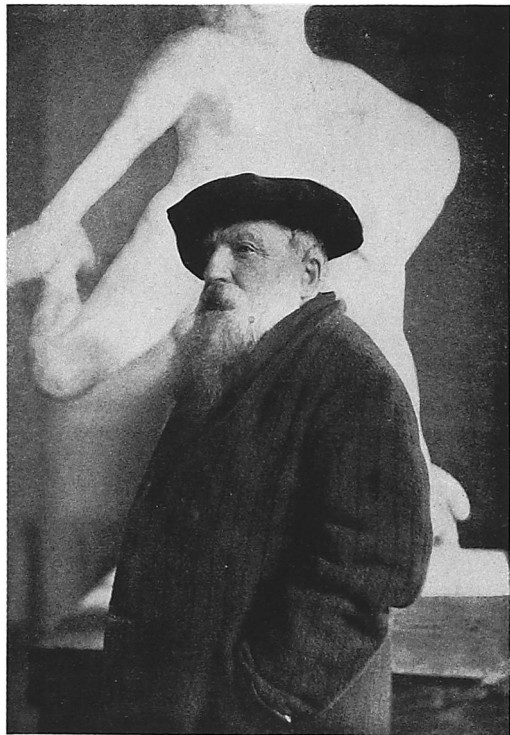


AUGUSTE RODIN
FROM PORTRAIT BY A. LEGROS

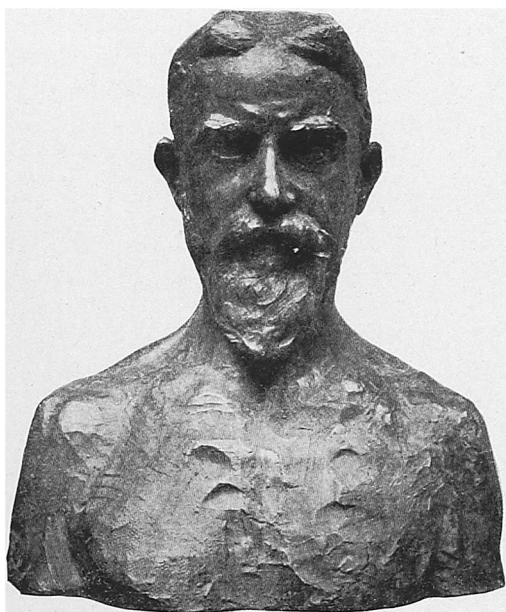
are a most impressive chapter of biography. Among those we are to see later on, at the Luxembourg, are those of Dalou, Puvis de Chavannes, Laurens, Falguière, Victor Hugo, Rochefort, etc. His busts have made people sit up and take notice more than once. It is not just luck or a happy chance that makes them real indications of the mental and physical characteristics of his models. It is hard work that accomplishes this. We saw in glass cases sketches of busts, studies of a pose or detail, series of studies showing each successive stage of his work. He uses these series of documents to get the synthesis, the essential and fundamental truth in his model. Rodin in speaking of these different sketches said: "Elimination plays its part; when a passing light thrown on a thoughtful brow has shown me the profundity of a soul it does not amuse me to reproduce hairs one by one."

This does not mean that Rodin does not find interest in the study of details or anatomy. He told us that he was as much interested in this subject as any surgeon, for each anatomical detail suggests character, and in order to obey the first commandment

of the religion of art, one must know how to model a torso, an arm, or a leg—how to see and reproduce the texture of the skin, the malformations caused by different occupations, and, "furthermore, the artist should be a man of science and patience. He should leave nothing to hazard. Everything that he does should be the product of his will. Nature comprises all. Really one needs no imagination to be a great artist. To look on nature is enough. Dabblers in sculpture will tell you it is very hard to become a sculptor of power. Again, I say, look at nature herself, work patiently, and use a little intelligence. At first, like everybody else, I considered the human body as something peculiar, exceptional, but I realized later that it was governed by the same laws which rule the trees and the clouds, the hills and the plains. It dawned upon me that the human form is but a part of the great whole, of the eternal life flux. I found out that every one of nature's products has greatness and beauty and that



AUGUSTE RODIN IN HIS STUDIO



PORTRAIT BUST OF GEORGE BERNARD
SHAW
By AUGUSTE RODIN

the mission of art is not, as academics teach us, to ennoble nature but to discover nature. They pretend that the ancients wished to teach nature by creating an abstract beauty of simplified form which should appeal only to the intellect and not consent to flatter the sense. And those who talk like this take examples which they imagine they find in antique art as their authority for correcting, for emasculating nature, reducing it to contours so dry, cold and meager that they have nothing in common with the truth.

"The young artists of today understand nothing; they copy to satiety the classic ornaments and designs, and reproduce them in so cold a manner that they lose all meaning. The ancients obtained their designs from nature. They found their models in the garden, even in the vegetable garden. They drew their inspiration from its source. The cabbage-leaf, the clover, the oak-leaf, the thistle, and the brier are the motives of the Gothic capital. It is not photographic truth, but living truth, that we must seek in art.

"When I was young," he said, "I believed

the artist had the right to daunt Nature and to straighten her out. Before you know Nature you think yourself called upon to improve her. The older I get, the more passionately I worship her, the more clearly I see that she is always right. This takes an intimate understanding of Nature. The harder we strive to unveil her the more things we discover in her. Work is a fount of inspiration; we need not fear to succumb to the influence of our environment once our eye has learned to behold the inexhaustible riches of nature, once we have set out with only one aim, to express Nature in her perfect truthfulness.

"It did not come to me all at once. I ventured very carefully. At first I was afraid and then gradually as, face to face with Nature, I grew to understand her better and to cast aside prejudice more frankly



CRYING WOMAN
By AUGUSTE RODIN



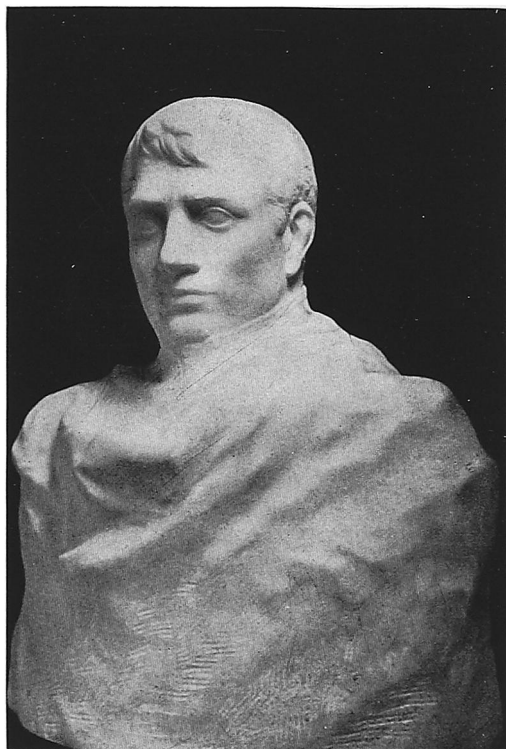
BUST OF WOMAN
By AUGUSTE RODIN

for her love, I became bolder; I made an attempt; I was not ill-pleased. It seemed to me better. . . . The study of the Antique also encouraged me and the sculpture of the middle-ages which is as fine as that of the Greeks. I have done all I could to conform in spirit to the great masters. At first I did clever things, spirited things—but I felt that it was not quite that. . . . It has been very difficult. . . . Art is not imitation and only fools think we can create. There remains only the interpretation of Nature. Everyone must interpret in the sense he likes best."

How a big man does the actual work is always interesting to the outsider. George Bernard Shaw gives a very amusing account of Rodin's making his own bust, in a criticism he writes on Gsell's book on Rodin:

"In the year 1906 it was proposed to furnish the world with an authentic portrait bust of me before I had left the prime of life too far behind. The question then arose: Could Rodin be induced to under-

take the work? On no other condition would I sit because it was clear to me that Rodin was not only the greatest sculptor then living, but the greatest sculptor of his epoch; one of those extraordinary persons who, like Michael Angelo or Phidias, or Praxiteles, dominate whole ages as fashionable favorites dominate a single London season. I saw, therefore, that any man who being a contemporary of Rodin, deliberately allowed his bust to be made by anyone else must go down to posterity (if he went down at all) as a stupendous nincompoop. Also, I wanted a portrait of myself by an artist capable of seeing me. Many clever portraits of my reputation were in existence; but I have never been taken in by my reputation, having manufactured it myself. A reputation is a mask which a man has to wear just as he has to wear a coat and trousers: it is a disguise we insist on as a point of decency. The result is that we have



UNFINISHED BUST OF BONAPARTE
By AUGUSTE RODIN



FRANCESCA DE RIMINI ET PAOLO IN THE TORMENTS OF HELL
By AUGUSTE RODIN.



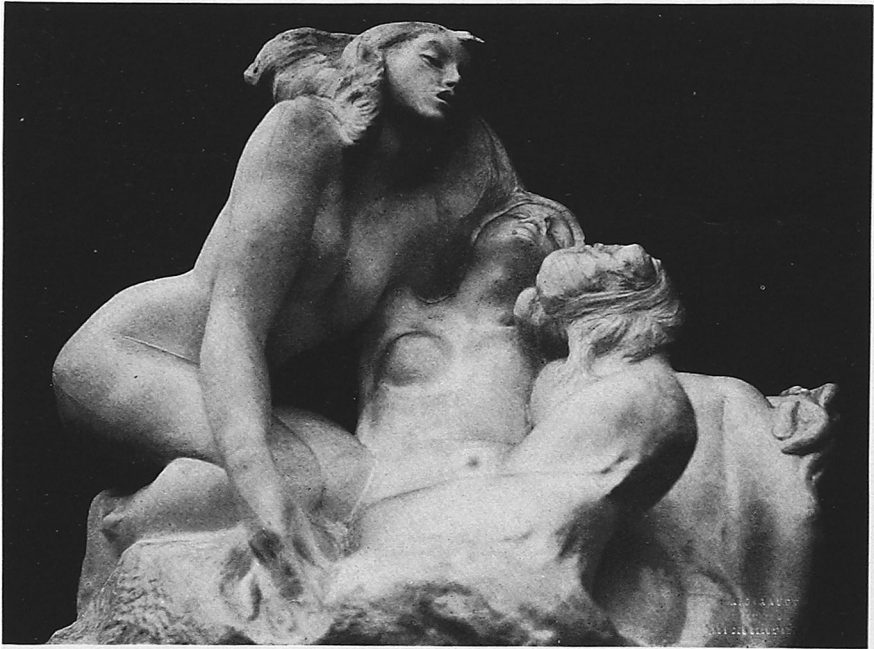
THE GATES OF HELL
By AUGUSTE RODIN

hardly any portraits of men and women. We have no portraits of their legs and shoulders; only of their skirts and trousers and blouses and coats. Nobody knows what Dickens was like, or what Queen Victoria was like, though their wardrobes are on record. Many people fancy they know their faces; but they are deceived; we know only the fashionable-mask of the distinguished novelist and of the queen. And the mask defies the camera.

"In the very interesting book which serves as the pretext for this communication Rodin tells us that his wonderful portrait busts seldom please the sitters. I can go further and say that they often puzzle and disappoint the sitter's friends. Look at the busts and you will see the reason. They are busts of real men, not of the reputations of celebrated persons. Look at my bust, and you will not find it a bit like that brilliant fiction known as G. B. S., or Bernard Shaw. But it is most frightfully



DETAIL OF
THE GATES
OF HELL
AUGUSTE RODIN



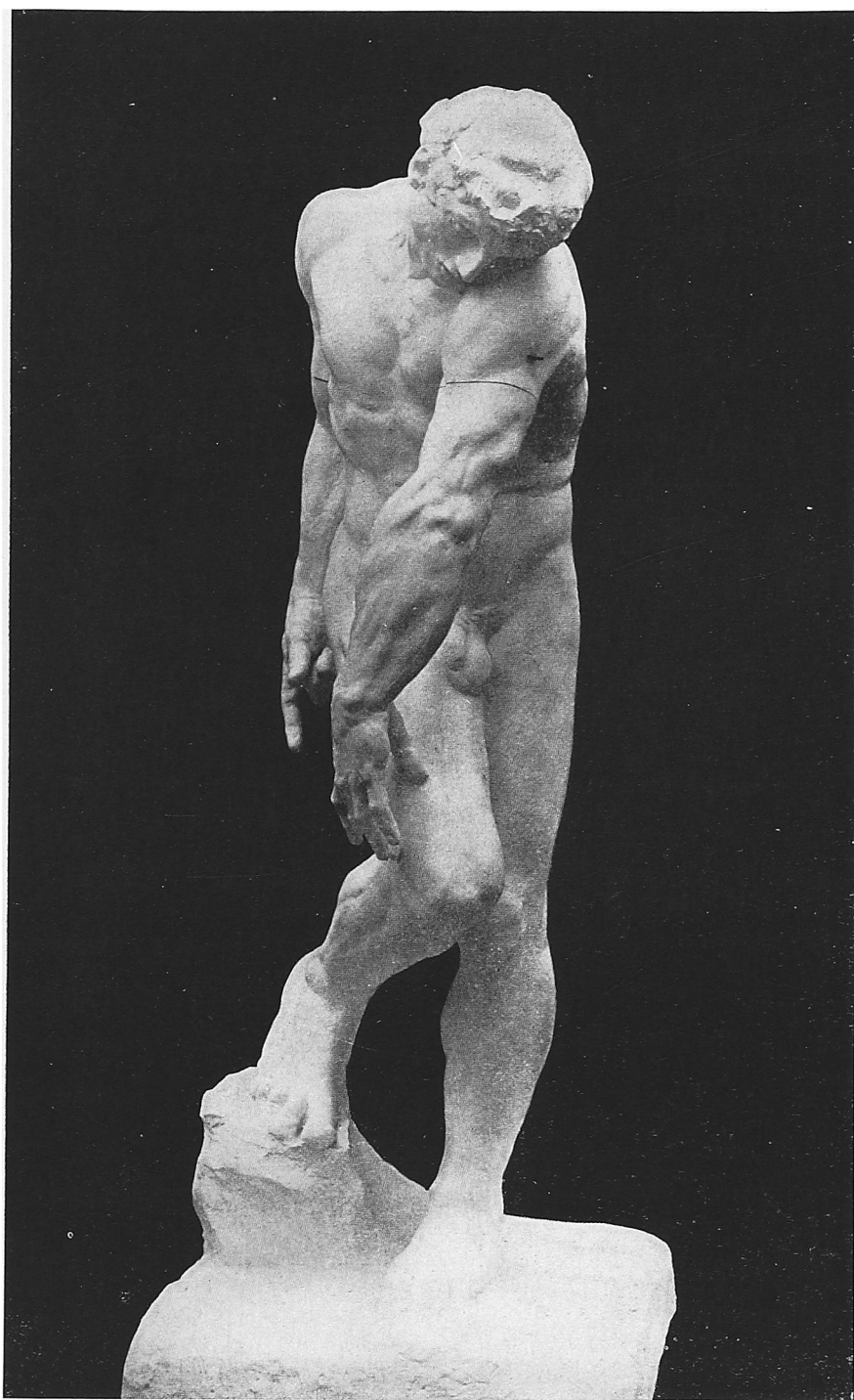
THE WAVES
By AUGUSTE RODIN



RESURRECTION OF THE POET
By AUGUSTE RODIN



EVE
By AUGUSTE RODIN

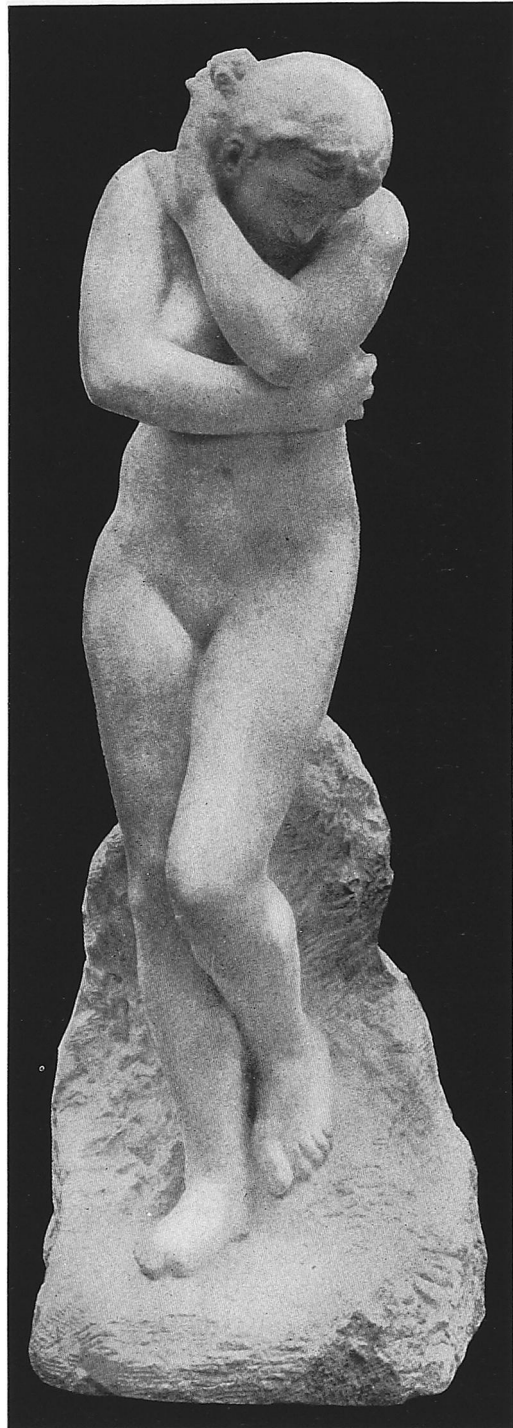


ADAM
By AUGUSTE RODIN

like me. It is what is really there, not what you think is there. The same with Puvis de Chavannes and the rest of them. Puvis de Chavannes protested, as one gathers—pointed to his mirror and to his photographs to prove that he was not like his bust. But I am convinced that he was not only like his bust, but that the bust actually was himself, as distinct from his collars and his public manners. Puvis, though an artist of great merit, could not see himself. Rodin could. He saw me. Nobody else has done that yet.

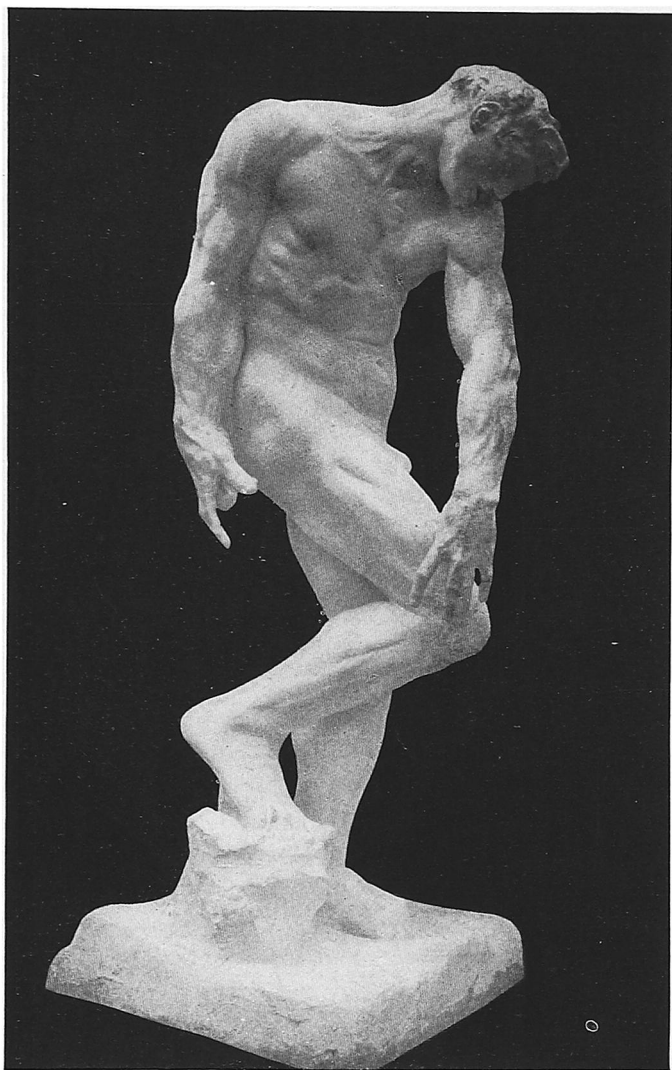
"Troubetzkoy once made a most fascinating Shavian bust of me. He did it in about five hours in Sargent's studio. It was a delightful and wonderful performance. He worked convulsively, giving birth to the thing in agonies, hurling lumps of clay about with groans, and making strange, dumb movements with his tongue like a wordless prophet. He covered himself with plaster. He covered Sargent's carpets and curtains and pictures with plaster. And, finally, he covered the block he was working on with plaster to such purpose that at the end of the second sitting, lo, there stood Sargent's studio in ruins, buried like Pompeii under the scorïæ of a volcano, and in the midst a spirited bust of one of my reputations, a little idealized (quite the gentleman, in fact) but recognizable a mile off as the sardonic author of *Man and Superman*, with a dash of Offenbach, a touch of Mephistopheles, and a certain aristocratic delicacy of distinction that came from Troubetzkoy himself, he being a Prince.

"Rodin worked very differently. He plodded along exactly as if he were a river god doing a job of wall-building in a garden for three or four francs a day. When he was in doubt he measured me with an old iron dividers, and then measured the bust. If the bust's nose was too long, he sliced a bit out of it, and jammed the tip of it up to close the gap, with no more emotion or affectation than a glazier putting in a window pane. If the ear was in the



EVE

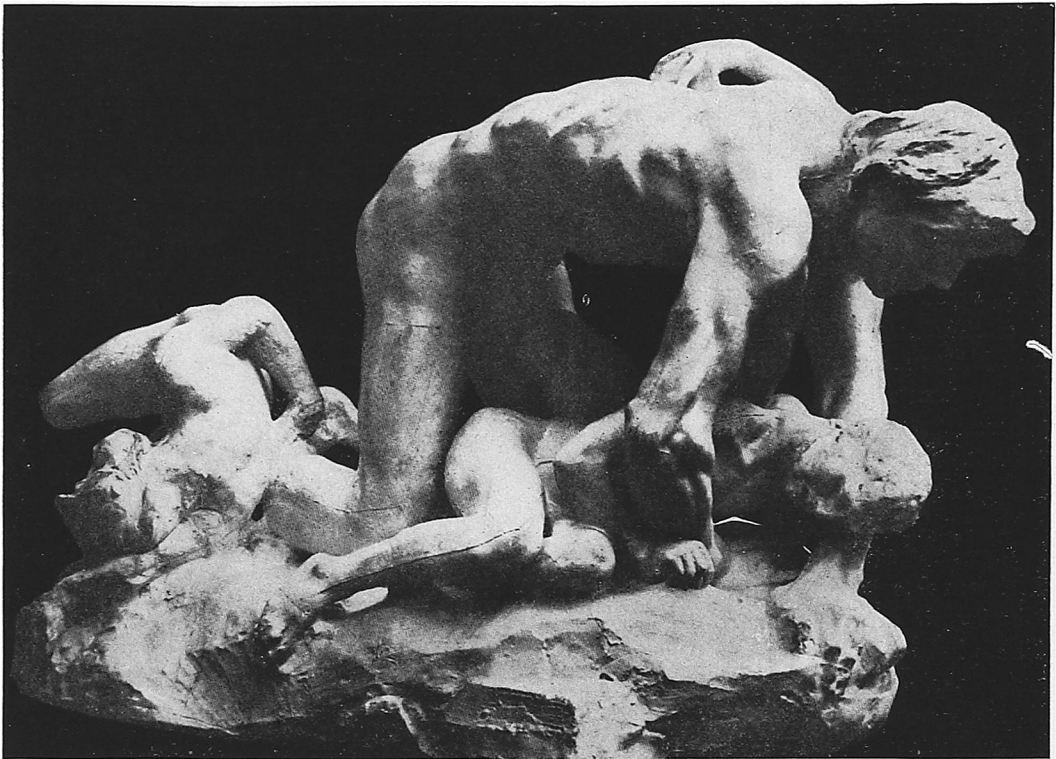
By AUGUSTE
RODIN



ADAM
By AUGUSTE RODIN

wrong place, he cut it off and slapped it into its right place, excusing these cold-blooded mutilations to my wife (who half expected to see the already terribly animated clay bleed) by remarking that it was shorter than to make a new ear. Yet a succession of miracles took place as he worked. In the first fifteen minutes, in merely giving a suggestion of human shape to the lump of clay, he produced so spirited a thumbnail bust of me that I wanted to take it away and relieve him from further labor. It reminded me of a highly finished bust by

Sarah Bernhardt, who is very clever with her fingers. But that phase vanished like a summer cloud as the bust evolved. I say evolved advisedly, for it passed through every stage in the evolution of art before my eyes in the course of a month. After that first fifteen minutes it sobered down into a careful representation of my features in their exact living dimensions. Then this representation mysteriously went back to the cradle of Christian art, at which point I again wanted to say: 'For Heaven's sake, stop and give me that; it is a Byzan-



UGOLIN (PLASTER)
By AUGUSTE RODIN

time masterpiece.' Then it began to look as if Bernini had meddled with it. Then, to my horror, it smoothed out into a plausible, rather elegant piece of eighteenth century work, almost as if Houdon had touched up a head by Canova or Thorwaldsen, or as if Leighton had tried his hand at eclecticism in bustmaking.

"At this point Troubetzkoy would have broken it with a hammer, and given it up with a wail of despair. Rodin contemplated it with an air of callous patience, and went on with his job, more like a river god turned plasterer than ever. Then another century passed in a single night; and the bust became a Rodin bust, and was the living head of which I carried the model on my shoulders. It was a process for the embryologist to study, not for the æsthete. Rodin's hand worked, not as a sculptor's hand works, but as the life force works.

What is more, I found that he was aware of it quite simply. I no more think of Rodin as a celebrated sculptor than I think of Elijah as a well-known *littérateur* and forcible after-dinner speaker. His *Main de Dieu* is his own hand. That is why all the stuff written about him by professional art critics is such ludicrous cackle and piffle. I have been a professional art critic myself, and perhaps not much a one at that (though I fully admit that I touched nothing I did not adorn), but at least I knew how to take off my hat and hold my tongue when my cacklings and piffings would have been impertinence.

"Rodin took the conceit out of me most horribly. Once he showed me a torso of a female figure, an antique. It was a beauty; and I swallowed it whole. He waited rather wistfully a moment to see whether I really knew chalk from cheese,

and then pointed out to me that the upper half of the figure was curiously inferior to the lower half, as if the sculptor had taught himself as he went along. The difference which I had been blind to a moment before was so obvious when he pointed it out that I have despised myself ever since for not seeing it. There was never such an eye for carved stone as Rodin's. To the average critic or connoisseur half the treasures he collects seem nothing but a heap of old paving stones. But they all have somewhere a scrap of modeled surface, perhaps half the size of a postage stamp, that makes gems of them. In his own work he shows a strong feeling for the beauty of marble. He gave me three busts of myself—one in bronze, one in plaster, one in marble. The bronze is me (growing younger now). The plaster is me. But the marble has quite another sort of life; it glows, and light falls over it. It does not look solid; it looks luminous; and this curious glowing and flowing keeps people's fingers off it; for you feel as though you could not catch hold of it.

"People say that all modern sculpture is done by the Italian artisans, who mechanically reproduce the sculptor's plaster model in the stone. Rodin himself says so. But the peculiar qualities that Rodin gets in his marbles are not in the clay models. What is more, other sculptors can hire artisans, including those who have worked for Rodin. Yet no other sculptor produces such marbles as Rodin. One day Rodin told me that all sculpture is imposture; that neither he nor anyone else can use a chisel. A few days later he let slip the remark, 'Handling the chisel is very interesting.' Yet when he models a portrait bust his method is neither that of Michael Angelo with his chisel, nor of a modeler in the round, but that of a draughtsman outlining in clay the thousand profiles that your head would present if it were sliced a thousand times through the center at different angles.

"In this book, which I am pretending to

review, Mr. Gsell appears as Rodin's Boswell, and reports very intelligently a number of practical observations made by Rodin. They are practical even when they deal with the most mythical recesses of art. For Rodin, like all great workmen who can express themselves in words, is very straight and simple and disposed to be useful to those who listen to him, and not to waste their time. He knows what is important and what is not, and what can be taught and what cannot. After all, apart from the acquired skill of his hands, which he shares with any stone mason, he has only two qualifications to make him the divinest workman now living. One is a profounder and more accurate vision than anyone else's. The other is an incorruptible veracity. That is all, ladies and gentlemen. Now that I have told you his secret, you can all become great sculptors. It is as easy as any other sort of manual labor, and much pleasanter—if you can pick up those two simple qualifications."

What Rodin said of Shaw's bust was shorter but to the point: "It is his double nature I have sought to express. You should have seen him here with our various pets. They all love him, but so did the people. There is a Christ and a Faun in him and I hope this bust brings out his two-fold personality."

This bust of Shaw is as great a contrast to that of *Mozart* as one can well imagine. The marvel of this serene head arising from a block of marble only dawns upon one as one realizes that it is Mozart dying. "The mouth is already closed for the eternal silence, only the superhuman brow lives. It seems as if the light that falls upon the noble planes of this being on the border of the invisible must emanate from the still living brow. The bumps of meditation above the closed eye already listen to the music of the celestial choir." Each one of his busts has some special interest, if one can but see it.

The *Gates of Hell* was his first big com-

mission; it is not yet finished, although he has worked on it ever since 1880. It is a terrible but most beautiful tumult of human passions. Someone has described it as a "Tornado of the passions and their incarnations whirling past the eyes of the spectator and gyrating with ever-increasing rapidity through the abyss that lies between life and death. Hell with its inhabitants rushes past the feet of three melancholy and contemplative figures. *Francesca and Paola* pass by. In the lower panels are sorrowful and weeping faces and round them turns a circle of female satyrs and centaurs, and the troop of the great god Pan, the life of joy that ignores all pain; thus the contrast between passion and nature; and the balance held between serenity and suffering."

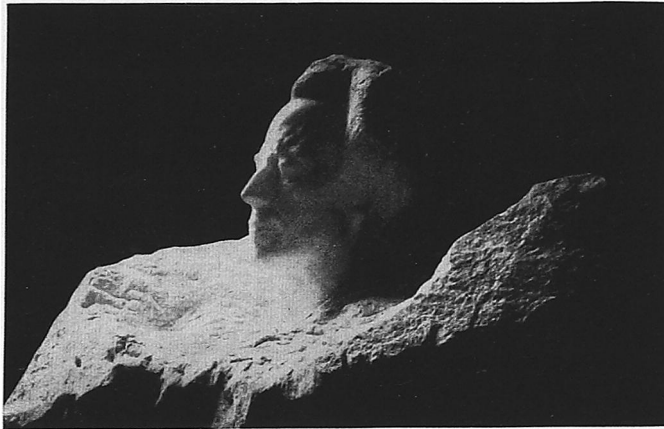
Adam and Eve are of course there. *Adam* rises from the earth out of which he has just been fashioned, muscles tense. *Eve* stands with head bowed on her arms in

shame. The story goes that a model came into Rodin's studio one day, and something he said to her made her fling her arms over her face with a quick natural gesture. Instantly he said: "Keep that pose"; then he modeled her and called her *Eve*.

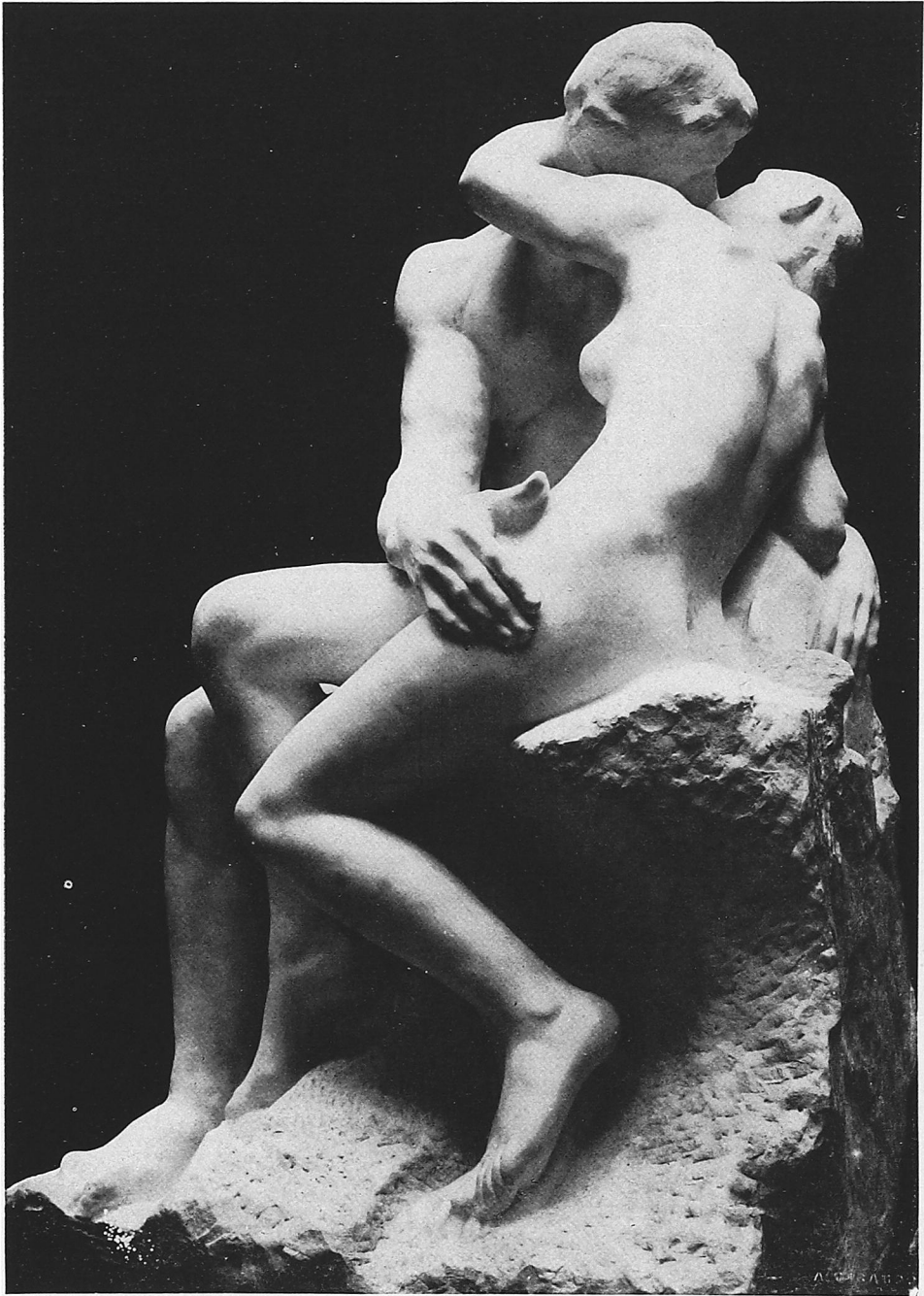
Ugolin, terrible in its realistic portrayal of the man's hunger battling with his paternal instincts. Rodin shows the sons already dead when the temptation to devour them comes to the father.

Rodin calls *The Gates of Hell* his Noah's Ark—his playground where he tries out his ideas.

He often puts a figure in, breaks it out, and carries the idea further turning it into a detached work, then replacing it by another. Those we have mentioned, *Adam*, *Eve*, *Ugolin* and *Francesca and Paola*, are but a few of the many figures that at one time or another formed a part of the *Gates of Hell*.



MOZART
By AUGUSTE RODIN



"THE KISS"

By *AUGUSTE RODIN*